

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 and 21-22 are pending herein.

1. Attached hereto are corrected drawings that are based on the replacement sheets filed on April 14, 2008.

2. The specification has been amended herein to provide a proper antecedent basis for the several phrases noted by the examiner.

3. Claim 1 has been amended to remove the objections thereto.

4. Claims 8, 21 and 22 were objected to for lack of clarity between the terms “an endmost unformed annular portion” and the previously recited unformed annular portions. Claims 8 and 21 have been amended herein to clarify that the endmost unformed annular portion is one of the unformed annular portions. Based on the foregoing amendments, withdrawal of the Section §112, second paragraph rejection is respectfully requested.

5. Claims 1-3, 8, 13, 14, 16, 21 and 22 are rejected under section 103 over Cramer et al. in view of Stihl. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

The PTO has relied upon Cramer for disclosure of basic features of a well known tolerance ring, and has acknowledged that Cramer fails to disclose or suggest a guide portion as claimed. Cramer discloses a well known tolerance ring design that utilizes shims to spread the load into softer contact surfaces of the inner or outer members. The design shown on Fig. 2 that is cited by the PTO is generally constructed such that the outer shim 12 is first placed into the opening or hole 20 of the outer member 22. This is generally accomplished by slightly compressing the shim, having a split ring design. Thereafter, the tolerance ring 10 is placed onto the inner shaft or cylindrical member 18. The sub-assembly of the cylindrical member 18 and the tolerance ring 10 is then placed into the hole 20 of outer member 22, or more accurately, the interior of shim 12. During this assembly process, the corrugations or waves 16 provide the natural guiding surface for ease of assembly and disposition of the cylindrical member 18/ tolerance ring 10 sub-assembly into the shim 12. The PTO acknowledges that the disclosed tolerance ring 10 fails to possess a guide surface in line with that which is presently claimed.

In an attempt to overcome the deficiencies of Cramer, the PTO relies upon newly applied Stihl. Stihl teaches a corrugated ring having a flared structure that is said to facilitate assembly. It is applicants' position that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have modified the tolerance ring 10 of Cramer to have the flared end of Stihl, as such a modification would serve no purpose based upon the typical construction process flow described above. That is, since the tolerance ring would have been disposed on the cylindrical member 18 in the unassembled state, in which the tolerance ring is in the non compressed position, no particular construction challenges would be encountered, and no notable benefits of the flared end would be realized.

It is noted that in the office action, the PTO makes reference to modifying the tolerance ring 10 of Cramer to make it easier to insert shim 12 into the tolerance ring. However, such statement does not make sense, as the sleeve 12 is not disposed in the tolerance ring 10, but is disposed within the opening of the outer member 22 to protect the soft interior surface of the opening.

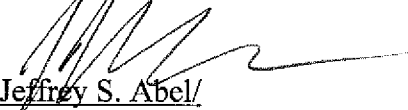
Applicants respectfully submit that the present claim event should not have been obvious over Cramer in view of Stihl. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 103 rejection over these references is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by the Applicants would be desirable for placing this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Applicants do not believe that any additional fees are due, but if the Commissioner believes additional fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-3797.

Respectfully submitted,



/Jeffrey S. Abel/

Jeffrey S. Abel, Reg. No. 36,079

Attorney for Applicant(s)

LARSON NEWMAN & ABEL, LLP

5914 West Courtyard Drive, Suite 200

Austin, TX 78730

(512) 439-7100 (phone)

(512) 439-7199 (fax)

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Date